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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 January 2002]

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*This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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1 - Twenty-two years of war in Afghanistan, in addition to the collapse of all the social and economic structures, has imposed an aggressive spirit of violence on the present generation in this country. The war has become a pattern of life and behavior for war-generals and the war methods have replaced the education of the new generation.

2 – The war has produced many women, children and civilian victims. The five-year rule of the Taleban regime in Afghanistan was an unbelievable oppression, which had made the lives of the Afghan people unbearable. Religious tensions, ethnic genocide and cleansing, extreme restrictions imposed on women and confiscation of property were all recognized and visible policies towards the oppressed people of Afghanistan.

3 – In fact, the Taleban was the first group in Afghanistan who extensively violated human rights and international laws. This regime murdered more than ten thousand Hazara civilians in Mazar in 1998 and Bamyan province and Yakawalang district (2000) and thousands of civilians in Kiassar (1998) and many in Takhar (1999), among them we can mention the genocide of civilians in Qazzal-abad. The Amnesty International reported "in September (1997) about 70 civilians, including women and children, were deliberately and arbitrarily killed by armed guards in Qezelabad village near Mazar-e Sharif. Survivors said the massacre was carried out by *Taleban* guards retreating from positions they had captured in the area, but *Taleban* officials denied responsibility for the killing. All of the victims reportedly belonged to the Hazara minority. Among the victims was a boy aged about eight who was reportedly killed and decapitated; other victims reportedly had their eyes gouged out with bayonets. Two boys aged about 12 were reportedly held by the guards and had their arms and hands broken with stones." Thousands of shops and homes were burned down in these regions. The "scorched earth" policy was the most common method used against the Tajik, Hazareh and Uzbek tribes in the attempt of destroying them physically and emotionally.

4 – The Taleban was not only against the people of Afghanistan, but it was also against all international organizations and the international community including its neighbouring countries. This regime had turned Afghanistan into a centre for training terrorists, drugs production and trafficking, murder and violence and seriously threatened the fundamental and basic human rights of the Afghan people by force and mass murders. This factor had produced a new wave of refugees seeking safety in Iran.

5 – Afghanistan has, thanks to the support of the international community started a new wave of resistance against oppression. This is a historic move towards the provision of human rights to women, the observance of human rights and the realization of democracy, peace and freedom.

6 – It is necessary for us to mention the significance and vital key role NGOs play in the Afghanistan and point out the following:

- Working inside Afghanistan to encourage and guide in conjunction with approved countries in the reconstruction of the country.

- Help to enlighten the public mentality for the purpose of more understanding for finding solutions for the Afghan people's problems, which includes the partnership of the people and the international community in the reconstruction of the country.

- Collecting and exchanging information and experiences between NGOs in particular with Afghan NGOs and strengthen their capabilities.

- The direct and planned participation in the reconstruction and development of education, cultural activities, health services, construction measures, etc.

7 – The role and task of NGOs in Afghanistan is very extensive. But in setting suitable priorities in relation to the present conditions in the country the following must come first:

- The problem of refugees and displaced persons and the necessity for the organization of their repatriation and making use of their expertise, experiences and financial capacities;

- Special attention to children's health, nutrition and education;

- The issues related to the women and children as the most vulnerable social groups in Afghan society;

- Special attention to the cultural issues of the country, and assistance to the development of media and other educational and cultural institutes;

- Attention to the urgent needs of the Afghan people, the primary infrastructure for sustainable development, and prompt provision of aid to various parts of the country should be made.

8 - We think that the duty of the non-governmental organizations is to assist the Afghan society, the people, the NGOs, and the State of Afghanistan in their way for realization of a sustainable development, creation and empowering of a civil society, and regulating the citizenship laws disregarding any ethnic, religious, language or regional differences.

9 - The guarantee for the implementation of the civil laws based on citizen's rights can be the historical memory, the sufferings of the people and intellectual maturity of Afghan society, especially refugees and also, the existence of active, informed and organized civil bodies related to the international networks of non-governmental organizations. It is clear that Afghan non-governmental organizations should show their talents and merits for such efficient role as a replacement for the previous traditions bodies.

10 - Also, from the sociological point of view, the efficiency of the non-governmental organizations as the pioneers of the realization and strengthening of civil society, leads to this fact that the existing great and active ethnic, religious and language gaps will be filled and Afghanistan can come out of the existing critical state, and instead, such differences in this society become sources of pluralism. As a general rule, such pluralism is reflected among the cultural and intellectual thinking of the young generation and can be regarded as a new era in the legal and political structure of this country.

11- We take this opportunity and declare that as a non-governmental organization, which defends victims of violence, has started a project to establish a rehabilitation centre for victims of violence in Afghanistan. We hope that this project will be fulfilled with the cooperation of Afghan NGOs and international organizations.